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**CABINET****17<sup>th</sup> April 2019****Subject Heading:*****Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime Strategy 2019 -2022*****Cabinet Member:**

Councillor Viddy Persaud, Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Safety

**SLT Lead:**

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There are no financial implications associated with recommending the Strategy for approval. It is envisaged the strategy will be implemented within existing budgets/grant funding available. Any issues arising will be raised through the appropriate channels as needs arise.

**Is this a Key Decision?**

Significant effect on two or more Wards

**When should this matter be reviewed?**

April 2020

**Reviewing OSC:**

Crime and Disorder Overview &amp; Scrutiny

**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Communities making Havering

Places making Havering

Opportunities making Havering

Connections making Havering

## SUMMARY

The Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime strategy focuses on tackling knife crime and gangs; early intervention for those on the periphery of crime; and safeguarding our young people (from exploitation & county lines<sup>1</sup>) over the next 3 years.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet approve the Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime Action Plan 2019-2022.

## REPORT DETAIL

1. The Strategy sets out the London Borough of Havering's plan to address Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime over the next four years.
2. The Strategy not only takes into account the local picture for Havering, but it also links closely with the Mayor of London's 2017-2021 Police and Crime Plan, the Mayor's 2017 Knife Crime Strategy and the Home Office report on Ending Gang Violence and Exploitation 2016.
3. **Main strategic ambitions focus on:**
  - 3.1. **Tackling knife crime and gangs** – The Mayor of London makes it clear that it is too easy for young people to get hold of knives, even with restrictions on their sale. One of the first steps to preventing violence is to take knives off our streets and have tougher penalties to act as a deterrent for those who break the rules. He also makes it clear that tackling gangs requires a partnership approach between local authorities, schools, youth services and the police. For some communities, gang activity and the related threat of violence is a daily occurrence. Going forward it is key to provide positive alternatives and exposing the damage that gangs do to gang members and society.
  - 3.2. **Early intervention for those on the periphery of crime**– This is not about creating soft justice for young people, but rather it is about delivering smart justice, reducing crime by recognising and dealing with the needs and the circumstances of particular young people that can lead to them offending. Working with employers to improve pathways into apprenticeships and

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<sup>1</sup> Using mobile phone lines to facilitate drug orders and supply to users. Involves crossing borough/ county borders

jobs, and finding effective alternatives to custody will be key over the next four years.

**3.3. Protecting and safeguarding our children (from exploitation & county lines)** - The Mayor of London points out that too many children are born into violent and abusive households, into communities damaged by crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB), into chaotic families affected by drugs and alcohol abuse. Further to this the Home Office highlighted the exploitation of vulnerable people by hard core gang members to sell drugs through county lines as an issue that needs addressing. It is imperative that councils and partners get the basics of child protection right so that we can improve our performance on keeping London's children safe.

## **4. Key Actions**

4.1. The key actions of this strategy are included in the action plan which focuses on:

- 4.1.1. Prevention - The purpose of prevention is to reduce the flow of young people who become involved in knife crime, serious youth violence and offending groups. Although it is impossible to assess the impact of prevention, it is important that we attempt to deglamourize the culture associated with serious youth violence as early as possible to either deter future involvement, or to identify those likely to engage in future criminal activity and violence.
- 4.1.2. Intervention- The purpose of intervention is to deter and divert young people from carrying knives or thinking of carrying knives, or on the periphery of serious youth and group violence.
- 4.1.3. Enforcement- Enforcement should be the last resort, when intervention has proved ineffective. Suppression and enforcement should be used to deal with the most criminally active young people who pose a risk to others or themselves. Selecting an individual for enforcement, intensive monitoring and targeting by police and prosecutors should not be permanent or indefinite. The most successful enforcement would be that which influences the offender to stop carrying a weapon, stop offending, and take up offers of intervention.
- 4.1.4. Intelligence & Information sharing- Multi-Agency information sharing to ensure work around gangs, serious group violence and knife crime is appropriately targeted and as accurate as possible. It will also make sure the most suitable and appropriate responses are identified for individuals who are being risk managed.
- 4.1.5. Further information on the types of prevention, intervention, enforcement, intelligence and information sharing can be found in the Strategy at Appendix 1.

## **5. Measures of performance**

5.1. The key performance measure will be a reduction in the volume of serious youth violence victims and most serious weapon enabled violent crimes reported to police and responded to by the London Ambulance Service in Havering; and a cumulative reduction in proven offending by those individuals being worked with through the East Area Gangs Unit and the Serious Group Violence panel in Havering.

## **6. Authorisation and communication**

6.1. The strategy will be endorsed and approved by the Havering Community Safety Partnership. The Community Safety and Development Team will take a coordinating lead in implementing the Strategy, as recommended by the Home Office Ending Gangs and Youth Violence strategic documents.

## **7. Implementation and Monitoring**

7.1. The Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime Strategy will be implemented and monitored through the existing Havering Community Safety Partnership structure and delivery model.

## **8. Evaluation and review**

8.1. The Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime Strategy and associated action plan will be monitored and reported to the Havering Community Safety Partnership on a quarterly basis

8.2. A full in-depth evaluation and review will be completed in the final year of the Strategy.

8.3. Due to the changes to policing, public sector services and a changing demographic, consideration should be given to re-conducting another peer review within the next 4 years. This could be done either by approaching the Home Office or by working with our partner boroughs to run our own review as a form of good practice.

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

9. The Council and other statutory partners have a responsibility under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to address crime and disorder within the borough.

## **10. Reasons for the decision:**

10.1. Nationally, the serious group violence and knife crime agenda is led by the Home Office in conjunction with a number of key partners such as the

Police and the National Crime Agency (NCA). This agenda is being supported and pushed forward by the Mayor of London.

10.2. The key objectives are to:

- Reduce violence including gun and knife crime
- Protect vulnerable individuals from violence and exploitation by gangs

10.3. The cross-government Ending Gang and Youth Violence (EGYV) report was first published in November 2011, this was as a direct result of the riots in August 2011 which took place across a number of London boroughs and in cities and towns across England. This has now evolved to the Ending Gang Violence and Exploitation programme in order to more accurately reflect the national picture.

10.4. This Serious Group Violence Strategy 2018-2021 is produced by Havering Council on behalf of the Havering Community Safety Partnership. It sets out the plans and actions that the partnership aspires to as a result of the annual Strategic Assessment, which is an analysis of the crime and disorder trends in Havering over the last twelve months. The Strategy also ensures that we are compliant with the Government agenda and that we maximise all available resources available to the Borough to target and support individuals caught up in serious group violence and knife crime.

10.5. The aim of this three year strategy is to proactively tackle knife crime and gangs in Havering, provide targeted early intervention for those on the periphery of crime and to safeguard our young people from exploitation and county lines.

10.6. Other options considered:

This is the second Serious Group Violence Strategy for the Borough, however the first to include Knife Crime.

10.7. Not to develop a Strategy. This was not considered to be an option given the increasing risks and given the public interest in this important subject

10.8. This strategy will be in alignment with the Safeguarding Adolescent Strategy and multi-agency partnership approach.

10.9. The Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce an annually refreshed community safety plan. Addressing serious group violence and knife crime are key priorities within the Havering Community Safety Partnership, Partnership Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20.

**IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

## **11. Financial implications and risks:**

- 11.1. There are no financial implications arising from recommending the strategy for approval and/or from its approval. Whilst implementation of the strategy will have financial implications the expectation is that this will be from within existing resources. Any issues arising would be addressed through the Councils usual budget monitoring processes.
- 11.2. Funding for serious youth violence in Havering comes from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) through the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF). A new system has been introduced where boroughs receive a committed allocated amount of funding on a 2 yearly basis. £114,000 per year was allocated for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. Continued funding for projects has provisionally been confirmed for 2019-21.
- 11.3. Any funding received will be governed and coordinated by the Community Safety Partnership via the Serious Group Violence Panel.

## **12. Legal implications and risks:**

- 12.1. This Strategy forms part of the suite of strategies which comprise the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Strategy, which is part of the Policy Framework which must be approved by full Council and is required by section 6 Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- 12.2. There are no apparent legal implications in approving the strategy.

## **13. Human Resources implications and risks:**

- 13.1. There are no HR implications in this decision.

## **14. Equalities implications and risks:**

- 14.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:
  - (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
  - (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
  - (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

14.2 The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- **Appendix- 1** Havering Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime Strategy 2017-2021
- **Appendix- 2** Havering Serious Group Violence and Knife Crime EIA 2017-2021
- **Appendix -3** Draft Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy